

Crafting Meaningful Moments

Bringing Jewish Rituals to Life



From Ritual to Meaning

In ritual, the world as lived and the world as imagined...turn out to be the same world.
—Clifford Geertz

Rituals are performed to bring higher — and perhaps illogical, magical, and delightful — meaning into our life experiences. Rituals help us make sense of our life-stages, construct personal and social meaning, and add to color our ordinary lives — Stanford School of Design

Ritual is a powerful means to inspire Jewish connection and commitment among participants in Israel trips and as well as programs on campus. Performed by individuals or groups, loudly and dramatically, or in intimate circles, the rituals you create and celebrate during your trip will bond your travelers to one another and to their Jewish identity.

Whether you want to make a traditional Jewish ritual meaningful and accessible, or you want to deepen connections within a group by creating a new ritual for a special moment, this guide is for you! These Crafting Meaningful Moments resources will suggest creative techniques for making some of the most common Jewish rituals your own. It also includes a “ritual worksheet” planner that will help you stay true to your original intentions for the rituals while also getting your creative juices flowing. Use these materials as a step-by-step guide, or as inspiration for your own creative and playful ideas.

An important note before you get started: When crafting a ritual, be sure to pay attention to participants’ needs. They will come with various levels of physical ability, as well as allergies and aversions to smells, tastes, smoke, etc. Be sensitive to those who cannot consume alcohol due to age or alcoholism. Also take into account that your group will include students with a wide range of Hebrew literacy and familiarity with Jewish ritual. Finally, expect that attention spans will be short and keep things moving.

Shape Meaningful Rituals

This packet includes the following guides to help you shape and mold rituals while on your trip and back home:

Crafting the Moment: Ten Gateways into Ritual

A general overview of approaches to creating memorable moments through ritual, with some solid examples to start you off

Ritual Worksheet

Three copies of our practical planner — just fill them in!

Ritual Guides

Enhance existing Jewish rituals, including:

Blessings of Appreciation

Hadlakat Neiroi (Shabbat Candle Lighting)

Kiddush (Blessing Wine)

HaMotzi (Blessing Bread)

Havdalah (Ending Shabbat)

B-Mitzvah Ceremony

Hebrew Naming Ceremony



Other Resources

Hillel's Crafting Ritual resource page at <https://tinyurl.com/Crafting-Ritual-Resources>

Find creative ideas and scholarly background in many helpful links to resources on the web

Hillel's Shabbat booklet

This handy booklet contains all the blessings said on Shabbat, the Havdalah service, and more

Assembly Required!

An outline of the information included in the Ritual Guides

Overview: A brief statement of purpose for the ritual begins each guide

Key Words: Vocabulary and concepts participants will need to know

Texts: Ancient and modern texts provide background for discussion

Ritual Items: A list of items you will need

Step-by-Step: Choreography of the ritual

Blessing: The text, a web link or a reference to page number in Hillel's Shabbat booklet where the Hebrew, English and transliteration of customary blessings may be found

Creative Adaptations: Examples of how to make the rituals accessible/meaningful/relevant for all students

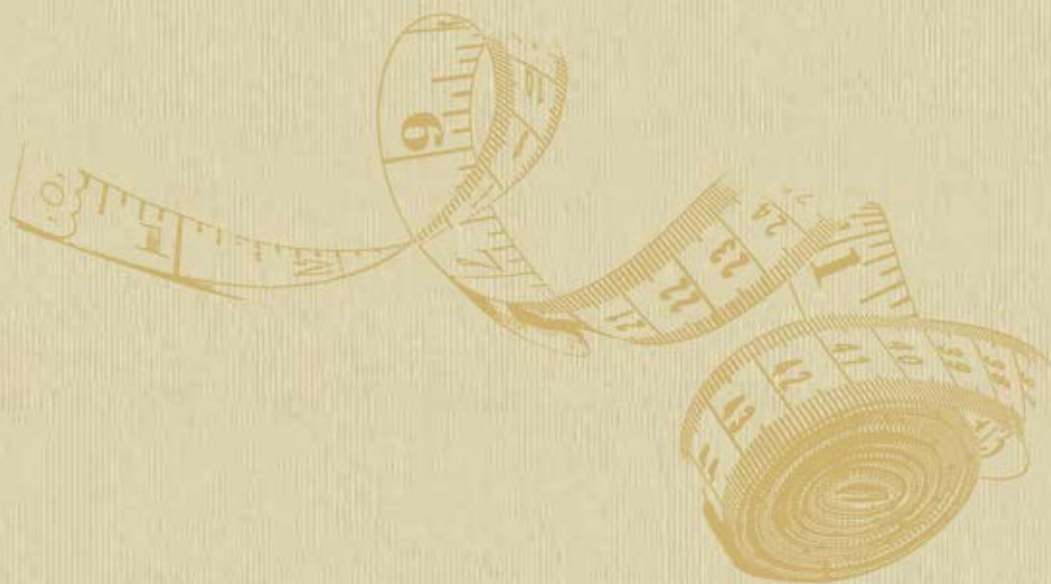
Themes for Reflection: Sample discussion questions about the rituals and texts

Want to Learn More? Links to online resources on Hillel's Crafting Ritual resource page, <https://tinyurl.com/Crafting-Ritual-Resources>

Next Steps... Use this Ritual with Your Students

Throughout the Year: Examples of how to bring this ritual back to your Hillel, connect it to year-round Jewish practice, and introduce it to students who weren't on the trip





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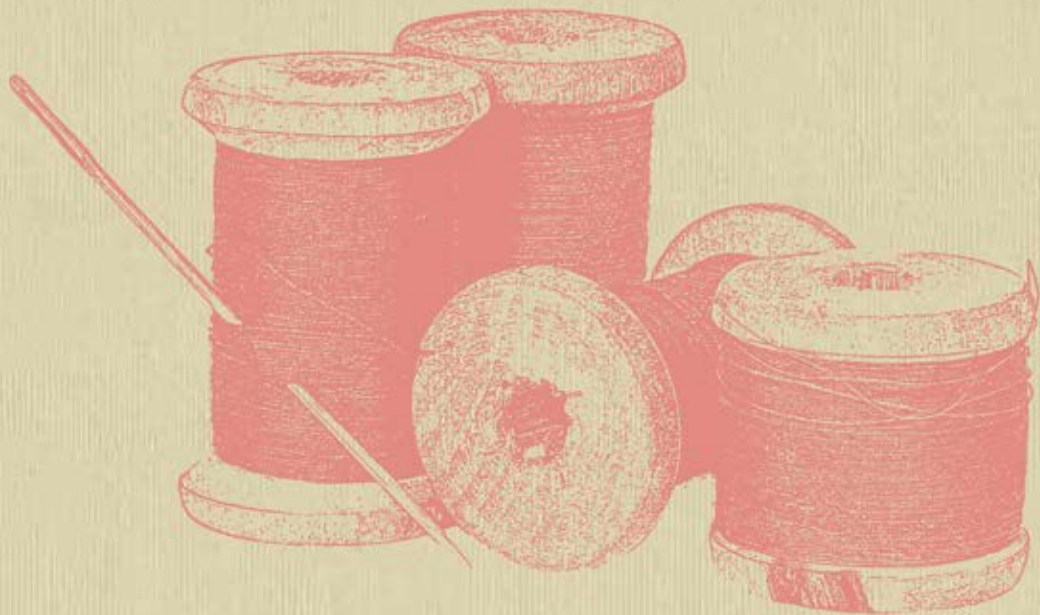
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Crafting The Moment

Ten Gateways into Ritual

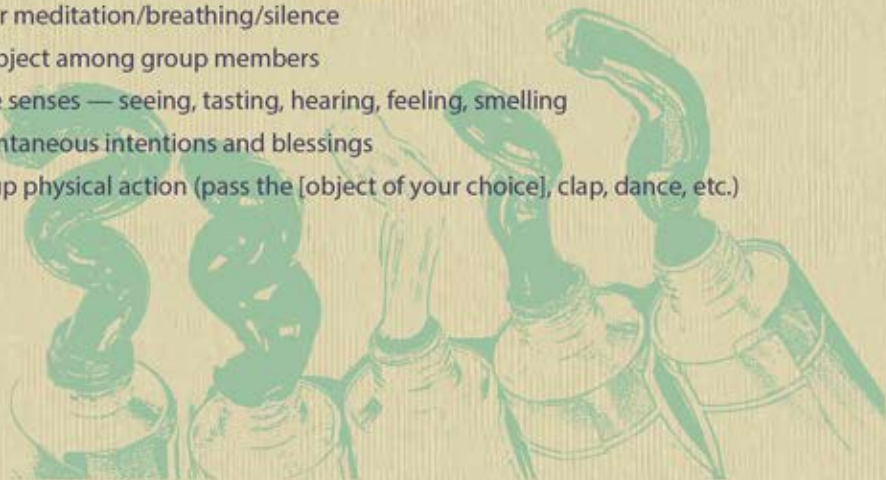


Getting Started

Channeling your group's energy into a brief ritual is good for morale, focus, and creating meaningful memories. Gateways, or opportunities from which to craft ritual moments are everywhere. They may be planned in advance (havdalah or a visit to Yad Vashem), or spring from something spontaneous (witnessing a rainbow, hearing news of a violent attack). As you craft your ritual, you may embellish it as you like; you can include a variety of ritual components, no matter which Gateway to the ritual you choose.

When crafting your ritual, consider designing some of the following materials into your plan:

1. Read formal liturgy out loud or to one's self
2. Read a poem or song chosen in advance by group leader or participant
3. Allot time for personal reflection, either individual journaling or verbal sharing in pairs
4. Sing a simple song or *niggun*
5. Read and reflect on a short midrash in small groups
6. Create space for meditation/breathing/silence
7. Pass a sacred object among group members
8. Engage the five senses — seeing, tasting, hearing, feeling, smelling
9. Encourage spontaneous intentions and blessings
10. Organize group physical action (pass the [object of your choice], clap, dance, etc.)



The Ten Gateways

Here are ten Gateways to crafting a ritual for any situation:

Gateway 1: Traditional Jewish liturgy is naturally baked into the week. Most groups have certain times in the week, such as Shabbat, when they expect to use traditional Hebrew liturgy. You can bring these alive in a way that is meaningful to participants, even if it happens only once during the trip. Tip: Print out text or have full text on a poster. Include Hebrew, transliteration, and English. Lead a tune in call/response format, or identify a participant who can help facilitate. Example: Candle lighting with full blessings followed by a poem about light.

Gateway 2: Weave tradition with creatively adapted liturgies. Even if you or your Israeli guide could read the entire prayer, that much Hebrew might not be meaningful for your North American participants. You can choose a selection from the liturgy and weave it with another ritual component. Tip: Bookend with liturgical components. Encourage spontaneity and group participation. Example: Before departing, open by saying "let's create a travelers' prayer." Ask the group to share spontaneously in two rounds: 1) fears, things we hope to avoid; and 2) hopes, things we wish to happen. Then close with the liturgical line "barukh...shomea tefilah — Blessed is...who hears prayer."

Gateway 3: Work with materials of the natural world. A sunset, the ocean, a scorpion — these are all opportunities for blessings. Use a card such as the Hazon blessing card (find a link to this card on Hillel's Crafting Ritual resource page) for the full list. Encourage participants to call on the group or a few individuals to create an opportunity for blessings. Tip: have a contest of who can say the most blessings in a day. FYI, the rabbis teach that we should each say 100 blessings a day! Example: While on a hike in the desert, a small group sees an ibex in the distance and stops to say "meshaneh ha'briyot" — who "differentiates creatures".

Gateway 4: Savor the moment with food blessings. Taking time to say Hebrew blessings over food is a fun way to learn basic Hebrew as well as pause for a moment of gratitude. Once everyone is on board with the first six words (*Barukh...ha'olam*), you can have a simple chart/card with the rest of the endings (*adamah, eytz*, etc). Tip: Pick one meal or snack per day to

'quiz' participants on the proper blessings. Bonus — encourage folks to come up with original blessings in Hebrew after trying delicious new Middle Eastern foods. Example: Say "borei pri ha eytz" at the falafel stand over some olives, then have participants write spontaneous blessings about their favorite condiments.

Gateway 5: Knit the everyday into the sacred. When you connect Jewish teachings to existing daily rituals, participants are more likely to pay attention since they know what to expect. If they are excited about the ritual around the announcement, they will get excited for the announcement itself! Tip: Assign two to three participants to introduce each of these daily rituals throughout the trip. Example: Have participants offer a word of gratitude for the day prior to the announcement of the weather forecast; announce a Hebrew "phrase of the day" before summarizing news headlines; end announcements with a recurring silly song or clapping pattern to bookend these daily rituals.

Gateway 6: Shape minds and moods on the way to your next site. While your tour guide may have a regular spiel to introduce the next site visit, are your participants taking time to spiritually prepare for it? Tip: Put aside ten minutes on the bus or waiting in line for participants to set intentions for that day's visit to Yad Vashem or Har Herzl. Bonus: this can be especially useful if the bus is late or the line is unexpectedly long. Example: Give out sticky notes in three colors and assign a prompt for each color. Yellow — how I am feeling now, green — what I hope to learn, blue — blessings for the group experience. Have participants share in groups or make a wall of words while singing and grouping similar words together.

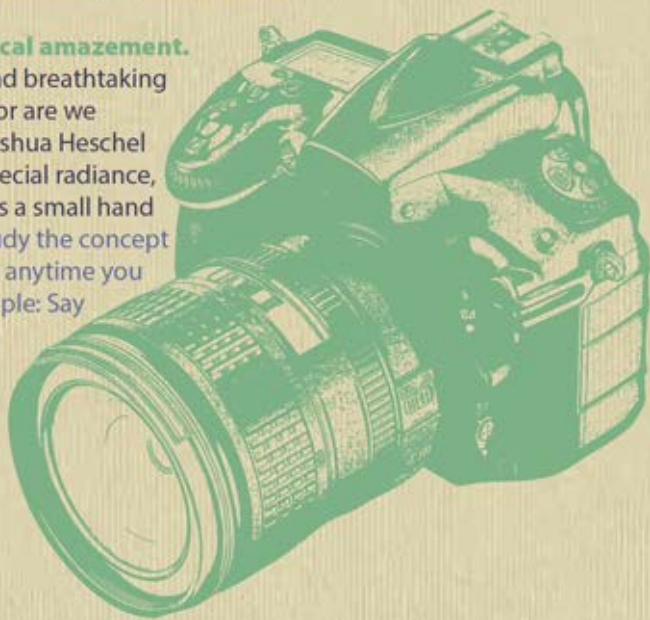
Gateway 7: Stitch together experiences as you transition from one to the next. Sometimes you only have a short amount of time for participants to integrate what they saw/heard/experienced. Whether you just saw the sunrise on Masada or listened to bereaved families share their story, including a ritual that helps transition from that experience to the next component can support the mood and flow of the day. Tip: Even if you only have a short amount of time, you can do a one word go-around, a physical gesture reflecting one's mood, or a 60-second pair/share. Example: Post a photo from the tour on Instagram with the same group hashtag and one sentence sharing a highlight.

Gateway 8: Get physical. Though many long days are spent on walking tours and hikes, we also spend a lot of our time sitting on buses. Adding a physical ritual can ground participants in a new space, lift spirits after some boredom, and even bond the group as they move in unison. Tip: Take notice of when the group could use a stretch break, even while taking part in physical activities. Example: When transitioning from a long time sitting and listening to a speaker toward a long bus ride, take five minutes for fun dancing or stretching.

Gateway 9: Get elemental. In addition to liturgy and music, many ceremonies include one or more of the four elements (earth, air, fire, water). Consider what is available (beeswax candle, water collected from ocean or sacred site, rocks from a hike, etc) versus what you want to seek out to collect (olive wood, melted snow, rock salt or a vial of water from the Dead Sea). Tip: Collect (or have participants choose) meaningful objects to include in the ritual. Example: Pass around a sprig of rosemary harvested in downtown Tel Aviv as the talking stick for evening reflections. Save it to use for havdalah on Saturday night.

Gateway 10: Design in time for radical amazement.

Golden Jerusalem, Tel Aviv Beaches, and breathtaking desert views. Are we really taking it in or are we rushing to the next thing? Abraham Joshua Heschel wrote: "The world is full of wonders, special radiance, and marvelous secrets, but all it takes is a small hand held over the eye to hide it all." Tip: Study the concept of Radical Amazement and call upon it anytime you might rush past a beautiful vista. Example: Say "shehekhianu" at the first glimpse of Jerusalem from the hilltop. Choose a key word such as "sababa!" (awesome!) to call out to other each time you see something that amazes you.





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Worksheet

Ritual Ingredients	Questions to Consider	Designing Your Ritual
Space Environment Context	How am I using the space around me? • Where will the ritual occur? • Is there an aesthetic set-up around the ritual? • How do I transition people in and out of the experience?	
Senses	How am I using sight? • Sound? Smell? • Touch? • Taste?	
Choreography	How are people going to stand/move? • Is there a shape that this ritual makes in space? • How many people are participating? • How will they be oriented in the space?	

Worksheet

Ritual Ingredients	Questions to Consider	Designing Your Ritual
Order Actions	What comes first? • Consider text, translation, halacha, time, props, transitions.	
Story	What is the ritual about? • How does it make us interact with each other and/or the world around us? • What do you want to happen at the end of the ritual?	
Participation	Who is leading the ritual? • Do others also have active roles? • Will they be holding something, sharing a song, exchanging words with each other, lighting candles, etc.?	

Ritual Guide to
Haddlakat Neivot
(Shabbat
Candle
Lighting)



The Set Up

We light candles on Friday evening to mark the transition from six working days to Shabbat, the Jewish day of rest. Candle lighting is accompanied by a blessing that acknowledges this ritual as a commandment.

Key Words: Light Flame Reflection Transition Holiness Pause

Ritual Items: Candlestick; Regular or battery operated candles or tea lights; Matches
Hillel *Shabbat* booklets **Tip:** In Israel, you can often find wicks to float in a shot glass of oil, to be used in place of a regular candle.

Step-by-Step:

1. Set up the candles in a safe space.
2. Light the candles
3. It is customary to hold out the hands and draw them closer toward the eyes.
Do this three times.
4. Cover the eyes.
5. Say the blessing.
6. Finally, remove the hands, look at the candles and benefit from their light.

Tip: If you aren't able to say the blessing over real candles, you can use battery powered candles or even say the blessing over a light fixture.

Blessing over the Shabbat Candles:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שַׁבָּת:

Barukh atta Adonai Elohenu melek ha-olam asher kiddeshanu bemitsvotav vetsivvanu lehadlik ner shel Shabbat.

Blessed are you, YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah, majesty of the world, who sanctifies us through Your mitzvot and obligated us to kindle the light of Shabbat.

Creative Adaptations

Share with the group something (a thought or an action) that you would like to take a break from over the course of the Sabbath; ask them to say what they will forgo.

Take five minutes before you light to free write all of the people/places that could benefit from light.

Wave your hands three times over the candles. With each wave, draw in light for yourself, light for your family and loved ones, and light for the larger world.

Texts

Rashi on Talmud Bavli Shabbat 25b

"Kindling Shabbat Lights" — When one doesn't have anything with which to light, in a place where there is no source of light, there is no peace (shalom) by which to walk and one stumbles and walks in darkness.

רש"י על תלמוד בבלי, שבת כ"ה ב

"הדלקת נר בשבת." — שלא יהיה לו ממה להדליק ובמקום שאין נר אין שלום שהולך ונכשל והולך באפילה.

Shulkhan Arukh, Orach Chayyim 263:1

One should be careful to use a high quality oil lamp/candle. There are those that prepare two wicks, one to "remember (*zakhor*) [the Shabbat to keep it holy]," (Exodus 20:8) and one to "preserve (*shamor*) [the Shabbat to keep it holy]." (Deuteronomy 5:12)

שולחן ערוך, אורח חיים רס"ג:א

יהא זהיר לעשות נר יפה, ויש מכוונים לעשות שתי פתילות, אחד כנגד "זכור" ואחד כנגד "שמור".

Blessed is the Match, by Hannah Senesh

Blessed is the match that is consumed in kindling the flame.
Blessed is the flame that burns in the secret fastness of the heart.
Blessed is the heart strong enough to stop beating in dignity.
Blessed is the match that is consumed in kindling the flame.

Shabbas, by Michael Walden

Like a construction worker, I'm making Shabbas
They tell me it should be a labor of love,
but 'Housing Code § 613' says I should make it like this
Like a construction worker, I'm making Shabbas
making a house beautiful for
someone else.
I hope they like it.
Like a construction worker, I'm making Shabbas
and they're watching me,
so I roll up my sleeves and...
work.



Special Mitzvah, by Jennifer Breger on Ritualwell

When we light Shabbat candles, we are reenacting God's creation of light recorded in the first chapter of *Bereshit*. According to our Rabbis, Shabbat itself is the generator of light in the world, "And God blessed the Sabbath day. How did God bless it? With light. When the sun set on the night of Shabbat, the light continued to function" (*Bereshit Rabbah* 11, 2). The radiant light of Shabbat is a theme of Jewish sources through the ages. Not only does one's house shine on Shabbat but one's face is said to have a special radiance.



Themes for Reflection

Breger shows that "Shabbat itself is the generator of light in the world." How is this concept already true for you? How might it be true for you on this trip?

In pre-industrial times, lighting candles on Friday before sundown was a necessity in order to keep the laws of the Sabbath. Today, we continue to light them for symbolic meaning and for beauty. How does lighting a candle shift the mood of a room?

When is a time that you have created something and then needed to rest from it?

How can you use Shabbat to reconnect with different/new parts of yourself?

How can you honor and remember the Sabbath this week?

Want to Learn More?

To learn to sing the blessings, see a video on candle lighting, read Dr. Ismar Schorsch on the meaning of the candles and more, visit Hillel's Crafting Ritual resource page at <https://tinyurl.com/Crafting-Ritual-Resources> to find helpful links.

Next Steps

Use this Ritual with Your Students Throughout the Year

Host a make-your-own candle workshop. Experiment with different ingredients such as olive oil and beeswax.

Encourage students to gather with friends to welcome Shabbat, light candles and share reflection time.

Write group blessings connected to candles and light, then share them in a new how-to packet for Shabbat *kavvanot* (intentions).



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Ritual Guide to
Kiddush
(Blessing Wine)



The Set Up

We drink wine or grape juice on Friday evening as a symbol of the joy that Shabbat brings. Kiddush is accompanied by a blessing that retells the Biblical creation story and the commandment to observe Shabbat.

Key Words: Wine Creation Exodus Holy Distinction Sanctification Joy

Ritual Items: Wine/Grape Juice (or backup item such as pomegranate juice or kombucha if not available); Any cup set aside to hold the Kiddush wine becomes special

Step-by-Step:

1. Make sure that the challot on the table are covered.
2. Fill the leader's Kiddush cup, or fill everyone's cups with wine or grape juice.
3. Hold the cup in your dominant hand.
4. Have all those at the table in mind, or invite everyone to say the blessing together.
5. If only the leader has chanted kiddush, everyone else should answer "Amen."
6. Sip the wine. If only the leader has wine/juice, pour a little wine/juice from the leader's cup into each person's cup so everyone may drink.

Kiddush Blessings:

See page 8 for Friday night and page 10 for Shabbat day in Hillel *Shabbat* booklet.



Creative Adaptations

Read the creation story out loud (Genesis chapter 1-3).

Compare the Kiddush text to the creation story.

Do a short eating meditation with individual grapes, slowly chewing and swallowing while silent.

Ask the room to share *kavvanot*/intentions. Give a prompt related to joy, such as "What joy are you hoping to find this Shabbat?" Have individuals shout out their answer.

Texts

Talmud Bavli Pesachim 106a

The Tannaim taught: "Remember the day of Shabbat to sanctify it" (Exodus 20:7) – Remember it over wine.

תלמוד בבלי, פסחים ק"ו א
תנו רבנן "זכור את יום השבת לקדשו" (שמות כ:ז) – זוכרהו על היין.

Talmud Bavli Shabbat 119b

Rav Hisda said according to Mar Ukva: One who prays on Shabbat evening and recites "Vaykhulu" (i.e. the Kiddush), the two ministering angels who accompany the person at all times place their hands on his head and say to him: "And your iniquity has passed, and your sin has been atoned" (Isaiah 6:7).

תלמוד בבלי, שבת קי"ט ב
אמר רב חסדא, אומר מר עוקבא כל המתפלל בערב שבת ואומר "ויכלו" שני מלאכי השרת המליין לו לאדם מניחין ידיהן על ראשו ואומרים לו "וסר עונך ונטאתך תכפר" (ישעיהו ז:).

Psalms 104:15 (partial)

And wine gladdens the heart of humanity, Making the face brighter than oil...

תהלים ק"ד:ט"ו חלק

וַיִּין יִשְׂמַח לִבִּבְּ-אֲנוּשׁ לְהַצְהִיל פָּנִים מִשְׁמָן...

My People's Prayer, by Rabbi Lawrence Hoffman

The Rabbis thought of time the way we think of space. For them, it was possible literally to revisit the past or, better, to summon the past to reappear before us again, as if we were in it all over again. "Memory," then, in the sense of *zekher* or *zikaron*, denotes real revisiting of time. These words are like a signpost in time, pointing our way as we revisit it, the way a directional sign at a crossroads sends us to a destination in space where we have stood before.

Themes for Reflection

What makes wine a symbol of joy? Can grape juice also be a symbol of joy?

Is there a difference when drinking wine for Kiddush and drinking wine for fun?

How do the themes of "creation" and "memory" connect to our modern Shabbat observance?

Compare the steps from grapes ➡ wine and wheat ➡ challah. Each of these start with a plant/fruit and then takes many steps by humans to get them ready for consumption. Some call this "co-creation" between humans and God. How do you relate to the source and preparation of these items?

Want to Learn More?

To learn to sing the blessings, see a video on reciting kiddush, read about the meanings of the kiddush and more, visit Hillel's Crafting Ritual resource page at <https://tinyurl.com/Crafting-Ritual-Resources> to find helpful links.

Next Steps

Use this Ritual with Your Students Throughout the Year

Create opportunities for creative kiddush kavvanot (intentions) at formal Hillel dinners.

Encourage students to gather for informal dinners or picnics that include kiddush on Friday night or Saturday afternoon.

Host a study group before or after the trip to study in more depth about the origin of this ritual.

Harvest grapes and make your own grape juice during the trip, then bring back samples to share with the community.

Gather students for an Israeli wine/grape juice tasting night, then practice saying kiddush so new people can take turns leading at an upcoming Shabbat.





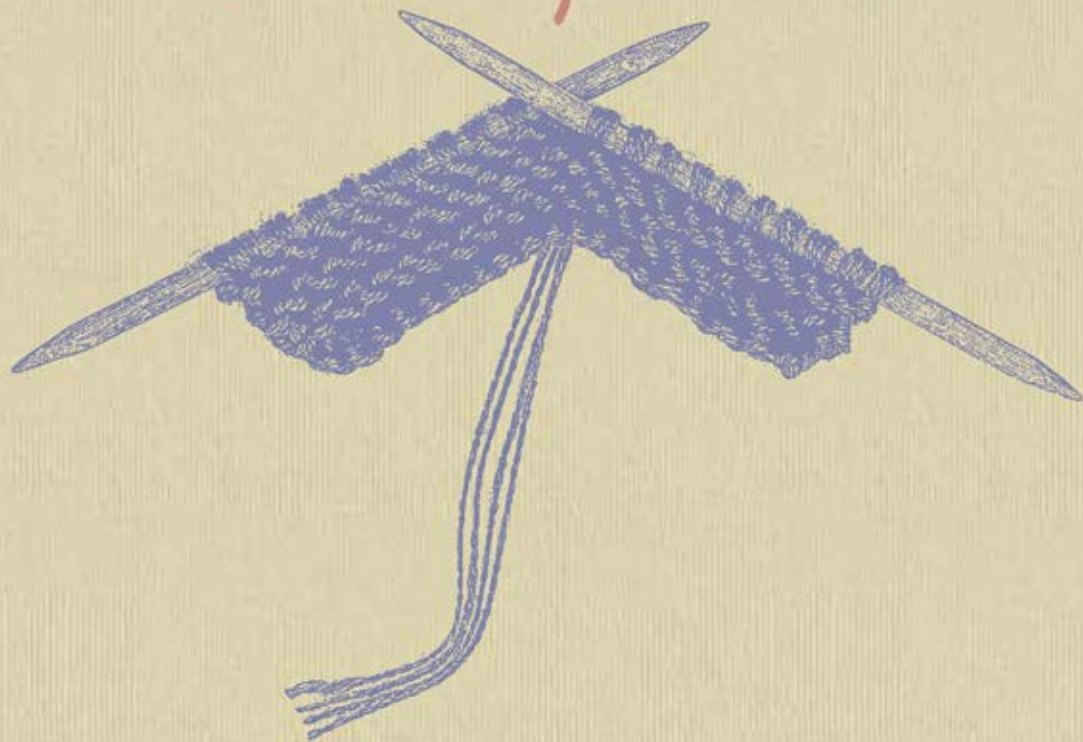
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Ritual Guide to
HaMotzi
(Blessing Bread)



The Set Up

We eat bread on Friday evening to open and dedicate the Shabbat meal, using whole loaves to represent the bounty of Shabbat. This ritual is accompanied by a blessing that acknowledges the source of the bread as grain created by God.

Key Words: Connection Bread Miracles Earth Wheat Harvest

Ritual Items: Two loaves of challah (whole pita or some simple rolls works great too); A challah cover or clean napkin; A challah or bread board (a plate is fine too)

Step-by-Step:

1. Hold up the two challot
2. Say the Blessing (or invite everyone to say it together)
3. Those around the table should answer "Amen"
4. Cut/rip the challah into pieces
5. Sprinkle with or dip into salt
6. Pass around the table for everyone to enjoy

Blessing:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ:

Barukh atta Adonai Elohenu melek ha'olam hammotsi lekhem min ha'arets.

Blessed are you YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah, majesty of the world, who brings forth bread from the earth.

Creative Adaptations

To gather the energy of the group, create a chain of connection by inviting everyone around the table touch someone who is touching someone who is touching the challah. You can also pass out rolls or pita and have people hold them together in small groups or by table.

Trace the story of challah from seed to loaf, including how it traveled to where you are.

Visit a bakery: Even if you're at a hotel/hostel that provides challah, visit a bakery before Shabbat and pick out a few varieties of challah. Bonus if you can make it to the shuk in Jerusalem or Tel Aviv, or - even better - one of the famous Lehamim Bakeries in Tel Aviv.

Texts

Genesis 18:5-6

"And I will take a morsel of bread, and sustain your hearts; after[ward] you shall pass on, because you have passed by your servant." And they said, "So shall you do, as you have spoken." And Avraham hurried to the tent to Sarah, and he said, "Hurry! Three se'ah of meal [and] fine flour; knead and make cakes."

בראשית י"ח:ה-ו

וְאֶקַח חֶמֶת פַּת־לֶחֶם וְסַעֲדוּ לִבְכֶּם אַחֵר תַּעֲבְרוּ כִי־עַל־כֵּן עָבַרְתֶּם עַל־עַבְדְּכֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ כֵן תַּעֲשֶׂה כְּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ: וַיַּהֲרֹץ אַבְרָהָם הָאֵלֶּהָ אֶל־שָׂרָה וַיֹּאמֶר מַה־רִּי שְׁלֹשׁ סָאִים קֶמַח סִלַּת לֹאֲשִׁי וְעֹשִׂי עֲגוֹת:

Numbers 4:7

And on the Table of the Showbread they shall spread a cloth of blue (t'kheilet) wool and they shall place on it the forms, the spoons, the supports, and the covering frames; the continual bread can then be placed upon it.

במדבר ד':ז

וְעַל | שֻׁלְחַן הַפָּנִים יִפְרֹשׁוּ בִגְד תְּכֵלֶת וְנָתַנוּ עָלָיו אֶת הַקְּעֻרֹת וְאֶת הַכַּפֹּת וְאֶת הַמִּנְקִיֹּת וְאֶת קִשּׁוֹת הַנְּסֹךְ לֶחֶם הַתָּמִיד עָלָיו יִהְיֶה:

Exodus 16:4-5

And YHVH (Hashem) said to Moshe, "I will rain down bread for you from the sky, and the people shall go out and gather each day that day's portion – that I may test them to see whether they will follow my instruction or not." But on the sixth day, when they apportion what they have brought in, it shall prove to be double the amount they gather each day."

שמות ט"ז:ד-ה

וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה הִנְנִי מַמְטִיר לָכֶם לֶחֶם מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיֵּצֵא הָעָם וּלְקַטּוּ דֹבַר יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ לִמְעַן אֲנִסְנֶנּוּ הַיֵּלֶךְ בְּתוֹרָתִי אִם לֹא: וְהָיָה בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁשִׁי וְהִכִּינוּ אֶת אֲשֶׁר יֵבִיאוּ וְהָיָה מִשְׁנֶה עַל אֲשֶׁר יִלְקְטוּ יוֹם | יוֹם:

Mishnah Shabbat, Chapter 7

The [number of] principal labors (Melakhot) is forty minus one. [The forbidden Melakhot are]: sowing [seeds], plowing, reaping, binding sheaves, threshing, winnowing, sorting, grinding, sifting, kneading, baking...

משנה שבת, פרק ז'

אַבֹּת מְלָאכֹת אַרְבָּעִים חֹסֵר אַחַת. הַזֹּרֵעַ. וְהַחוֹרֵשׁ. וְהַקּוֹצֵר. וְהַמַּעְמֵר. הַדָּשׁ. וְהַזֹּהֵר. הַבּוֹרֵר. הַטּוֹחַן. וְהַמְנַקֵּד. וְהַלֵּשׁ. וְהַאֹפֶה...

From "A Twist on the Traditional Challah," by Julie Moskin

Bread — shaping it, baking it, blessing it and sharing it — is part of almost every Jewish holiday. The bond among Jews, God and bread goes back to the first five books of the Bible: As the Israelites are about to end their exile, God commands them to show gratitude by setting aside a portion, or "challah," of all the bread they make after entering the Holy Land.

But nowhere in Jewish scripture is it written that challah is a braided, sweet, yellow, deliciously squishy bread of the kind familiar to most American Jews, which comes from the rich tradition of Eastern European baking.

There is another world of challah that evolved from the Middle East and North Africa, where the Sabbath breads were sometimes plain (the better to eat with the region's tangy, fiery and salty dishes) and sometimes sweet and spicy, with honey, dried fruit, caraway, sesame and — especially significant for Hanukkah — olive oil.

Themes for Reflection

Why do you think that bread - the most basic food staple - is given such prominence at the Shabbat meal?

What makes you feel that the food you are eating has come straight from the earth?

According to Kabbalistic tradition, the braiding of the challah symbolizes the weaving of our weekday mentality into a more sublime Shabbat-driven consciousness. What three things are you weaving together this Shabbat?

Want to Learn More?

Learn the history of challah, see a video on saying motzi, read about the deeper meanings of the blessing, locate the spectacular kosher bakeries of Tel Aviv and more! Visit Hillel's Crafting Ritual resource page at <https://tinyurl.com/Crafting-Ritual-Resources> to find links.

Next Steps

Use this Ritual with Your Students Throughout the Year

Baking challah is one of the most basic Jewish rituals, but most adults have never experienced it! Any day of the week can be a good time to bake challah.

If you don't yet have a Challah for Hunger chapter on your campus, consider starting one.

Purchase the cookbook "Breads" by Uri Scheft and have a challah baking contest based on the recipes in the book.

Visit a farm that grows wheat, or order some from Yiddish Farm online. Examine how the flour comes from wheat berries.



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Ritual Guide to
Havdalah
(Ending
Shabbat)



The Set Up

Havdalah is usually celebrated on Saturday evening right after the sun goes down. Using symbols of joy including spices, light, and wine, we say farewell to Shabbat and welcome in the new week.

Key Words: Separation Distinction Sweetness Fire Spices Five Senses Reflection

Ritual Items: Tea lights or Havdalah Candle **Tip:** If you aren't able to light candles due to hotel restrictions, you can use a ceiling light or a streetlamp for the light! Wine/grape juice **Tip:** If these aren't available, you can basically use any beverage other than water. Spices **Tip:** Harvest or purchase local spices such as cinnamon, cumin or za'atar, or herbs such as rosemary, throughout the trip as preparation for this ceremony.

Step-by-Step:

1. Wait until sundown (when three stars can be seen in the sky) on Saturday evening
2. Light a multi-wick candle (or hold two single-wick candles together; or point at an electric lamp, if needed)
3. Fill a cup with wine or grape juice until it overflows
4. Hold the cup in your dominant hand
5. Wine: Say the blessing of *Borei P'ri Hagafen*; put down cup, don't drink yet
6. Spices: Say the blessing of *Borei Minei Besamim*; smell the spices and pass them around for everyone to smell
7. Light: Say the blessing *Borei M'orei Ha-eish*; hold your fingernails to the candle so that you can see the light's reflection in them
8. Say the blessing of *Hamavdil Bein Kodesh L'chol*; sip the wine
9. Extinguish the flame in the wine

Blessings:

See page 23 in Hillel *Shabbat* booklet.

Creative Adaptations

Before the actual "service" of Havdalah: If it is a clear night and you are outside, ask your group to stop whatever they are doing and lift their heads to the sky. The first person to spot three stars should call it. People can then put their heads down. Look at the person on either side of you and around at the entire community. Mark the time. (i.e., "It is 6:18 and we are all here together closing Shabbat and entering a new week.")

Before Havdalah, share your highlights from Shabbat and/or goals for the week, either in pairs or with the whole group. Give a specific prompt such as those listed below in "themes for reflection."

Sit by candlelight and sing songs about separation, for example Leonard Cohen's *Hallelujah*, Carole King's *You've Got a Friend*, or *Slow dancing in a Burning Room* by John Mayer.

Tip: Have participants brainstorm English pop songs about "separation"

Tip: If you run out of time on Saturday evening, you can say Havdalah until Tuesday!

Texts

Maimonides (1138-1204), Mishnah Torah, Hilkhot Shabbat 29:1

It is a biblically mandated obligation to sanctify the Shabbat with speech, as it is written: "Remember the day of Shabbat, to keep it holy" (Exodus 20:8), i.e. remember through remembrance of praise and through Kiddush. And it must be remembered when it begins and when it ends. When it begins — with Kiddush, and when it ends — with Havdalah.

רמב"ם, משנה תורה, הלכות שבת כ"ט:א

מִצְוַת עֲשֵׂה מִן הַתּוֹרָה לְקַדֵּשׁ אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת בְּדִבְרִים שְׁנָאִמַּר "זְכוֹר אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקַדְשׁוֹ" (שְׁמוֹת כ:ח). כְּלוּמַר זְכוֹרָה זְכוֹרֶת שָׁבַח וְקִדּוּשׁ. וְצִרִיךְ לְזַכְרָהּ בְּכִנְיָסָתָהּ וּבִיצִיאָתָהּ. בְּכִנְיָסָתָהּ בְּקִדּוּשׁ הַיּוֹם וּבִיצִיאָתָהּ בְּהַבְדָּלָהּ.

Talmud Bavli, Beitsah 16a

Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish said: An extra soul ("neshamah yeterah") is gifted by the blessed Holy One to humanity on Shabbat eve. After Shabbat ends, it is taken away from them, as it says, "[Elohim] ceased working (shavat) and was re-spirited (va-yinafash)" (Exodus 31:17) — since the Shabbat ceased, the [extra] spirit is lost.

תלמוד בבלי, ביצה ט"ז א

דאמר רבי שמעון בן לקיש נשמה יתרה נותן הקדוש ברוך הוא באדם בערב שבת. ולמאצא שבת נוסלין אותה הימנו שנאמר "שבת וינפש" (שמות לא:יז) — כיון ששבת, ווי, אבדה נפש.

Talmud Bavli, Berakhot 52a

Beit Shammai holds that the arrival of Shabbat is different from its departure. In its arrival, the more we bring it forward the better. In its departure, the more we postpone it the better, so that [Shabbat] should not be [thought of] as a burden for us.

תלמוד בבלי, ברכות נ"ב א

קא סברי בית שמאי שאני עיולי 'ומא מאפוקי' 'ומא עיולי' 'ומא כמא דמקדמין ליה עדיף אפוקי' 'ומא כמא דמאחרין ליה עדיף כי היכי דלא להוי עלן כמשוי'.

Rabbi Jeffrey W. Goldwasser, Temple Sinai, Cranston, RI

This is not just a ritual for saying goodbye to Shabbat. Havdalah is a moment in which we rehearse the divisions that separate the world of material reality from the world of spiritual reality. Shabbat is understood as a gateway to the supernatural world and havdalah marks the transition in which the two worlds meet.

Themes for Reflection

How do you want to carry the spirit of Shabbat into your week?

When is a time that you have felt the pain of separation? What kinds of "sweetness" (like the spices, wine and light) did you seek out to make you feel better?

When have you experienced “sacred” moments?

How can you pay more attention to the senses around you?

How can you spice up your week? Does the separation and spirit of Shabbat energize your regular routine?

How can we use all of our senses for ritual in our lives?

Want to Learn More?

To learn havdalah melodies, read about the meaning of the ceremony, get a recipe for za’atar and more, visit Hillel’s Crafting Ritual resource page at <https://tinyurl.com/Crafting-Ritual-Resources> to find helpful links.

Next Steps

Use this Ritual with Your Students Throughout the Year

Gather group participants for a nosh & pre-havdalah party on a Saturday night. Perform the ceremony and share memories/photos from the trip.

Before or after the trip, make havdalah candles or spice bundles from scratch.

During the trip, purchase key items such as candles, dried spices, or Israeli tea to bring back to Hillel for use during havdalah during the rest of the year.

Combining one or more of the above (DIY vs. bought in Israel), box up havdalah kits for individuals to use in their apartments/dorms.



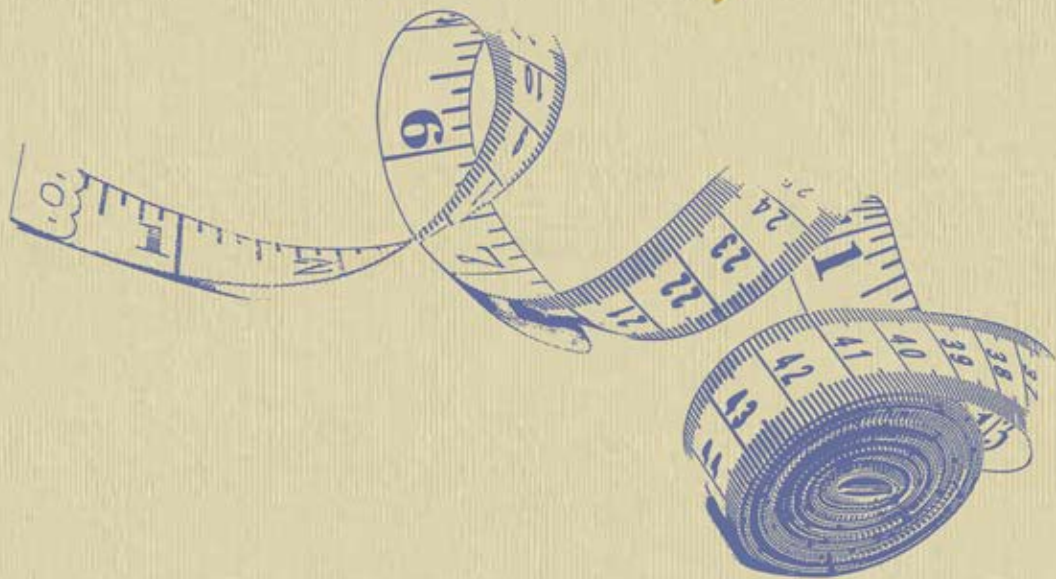
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Ritual Guide to a
Hebrew Naming
Ceremony



The Set Up

Jews call upon people with their Hebrew name for blessings of healing, blessings said when reading the Torah, and other key communal rituals. Jewish adults who choose Hebrew names for themselves are making a public commitment to their heritage and a shared Jewish future. Taking on a Hebrew name as part of a trip to Israel can bring another dimension of meaning and connection to the land, the Hebrew language and the Jewish people.

Key Words: Renewal Shem Hashem Legacy Heritage Identity

Ritual Items: Wine/grape juice; Anointing oil or water; Naming certificate; Pocket guide with sample names

Step-by-Step:

1. Words of welcome
2. Covenant Blessing and/or action (such as anointing of water or oil)
3. Statement by individual about taking the name
4. Bless the individual and announce the name: May his/her/their name in Israel be called _____. **See back page for additional blessings.**
5. Friends/relatives offer their own blessings/wishes for the person being named
6. Blessing on wine 7. Priestly blessing 8. *Shehekhyanu* blessing

Blessings:

May YHVH (Hashem) bless you and protect you! May YHVH (Hashem) shine Hashem's face upon you and be gracious towards you! May YHVH (Hashem) lift Hashem's face up to you, and give you peace!

יְבָרֶכְךָ ה' וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ. יָאֵר ה' פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וְיַחְנֶכְךָ. יִשְׂאֵל ה' פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וְיַשֵּׁם לְךָ שָׁלוֹם:

Yevarekheka Adonai veyishmerekha. Ya'er Adonai panav elekha vi'khunnekka. Yissa Adonai panav elekha veyasem lekha shalom.

Blessed are you YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah, majesty of the world, who has kept us alive, and has preserved us, and enabled us to reach this season.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁהַחַיִּינוּ וְקִיָּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמֶן הַזֶּה:

Barukh atta Adonai Elohenu melekh ha'olam shehekhyanu vekiyyemanu vehiggi'anu lazzeman hazzeh.

Creative Adaptations

The naming ceremony can be held for a group of five to ten participants, or it can be held for one person at a time.

Work with the participants to help them decide what name to take on. There is a list of Hebrew names in the staff pocket guide. The participant may also wish to consult with the Israelis in the group, including the bus driver and guard.

Sign a naming certificate. Optional: sign the name in both Hebrew and English letters

Note: The naming certificates will be in your staff bag. Let the Rakaz know if you need more certificates. The Zelda poem is on the certificate.

Texts

Psalms 147:4

[YHVH] counts the numbers of the stars; To each of them, [YHVH] gives a name.

תהלים קמ"ז:ד

מוֹנֶה מִסְפָּר לַכּוֹכְבִּים, לְכֹלם שְׁמוֹת יִקְרָא:

Isaiah 40:26

Lift your eyes on high and behold who has created these things [the stars], that bring out their host by number. He calls them all by names; because of the greatness of His might and because He is strong in power, not one is missing.

ישעיהו מ:כ"ו

שְׂאוּ-מַרוֹם עֵינֵיכֶם וּרְאוּ מִי־בָרָא אֱלֹהִי, הַמוֹצִיא בַּמִּסְפָּר צָבָאִם; לְכֹלם, בְּשֵׁם יִקְרָא, מְרַב אוֹנִים וְאִמִּץ כֹּחַ, אִישׁ לֹא נִעְדָּר.

Midrash Tanchuma — Ha'azinu 7

"Remember the days of old, Consider the years of many generations" (Deuteronomy 32:7 partial). It is always important for a person to choose a name for their child that will be perceived as righteous, since every time the name is pronounced, invokes either good or invokes evil.

תמדרש תנחומא, האזינו ד'

"זכר ימות עולם בינו שנות דור ודור" (דברים ל"ב:ז חלק). לעולם יבדק אדם בשמות לקרא לבנו, הראוי להיות צדיק. כי לפעמים השם גורם טוב או גורם רע.

Everyone has a Name, by Zelda (translated from the Hebrew)

Everyone has a name
given to him by God
and given to him by his parents.
Everyone has a name
given to him by his stature
and the way he smiles.
and given to him by his clothing
Everyone has a name
given to him by the mountains
and given to him by the walls.
Everyone has a name
given to him by the stars
and given to him by his neighbors.
Everyone has a name
given to him by his sins
and given to him by his longing.

Everyone has a name
given to him by his enemies
and given to him by his love.
Everyone has a name
given to him by his holidays
and given to him by his work.
Everyone has a name
given to him by the seasons
and given to him by his blindness.
Everyone has a name
given to him by the sea and
given to him
by his death.

Themes for Reflection

What does having a Hebrew name mean to you?

How do you expect to use your new Hebrew name?

What are the benefits of being an adult before choosing a name?

What is the role of gender in choosing a name?

Are you seeking a Hebrew name that connects to your English name? Why or why not?

What inspires a name? Some popular sources for names include family ancestors (Ashkenazim) or admired relatives (Sephardim), Biblical characters, famous people, and themes (animals, food, moods, etc.).

Is there destiny in a name?

Want to Learn More?

To learn how to choose a Jewish name, the meanings of popular Hebrew names, and more, visit Hillel's Crafting Ritual resource page at <https://tinyurl.com/Crafting-Ritual-Resources> to find helpful links.

Next Steps

Use this Ritual with Your Students Throughout the Year

Encourage students who receive a Hebrew name to create a collage or slide show and a brief blog post telling the story of their name. (Post it to your Hillel website.)

Offer students on campus the opportunity to choose a Hebrew name and receive it in a formal ceremony.

Highlight those who have chosen new Hebrew names in a newsletter, annual meeting, social post, or other special gathering back on campus.

Additional Blessings:

For a woman: May You who blessed (our foremothers): Sarah and Rivkah, Rachel and Leah, and the prophet Miriam, and Avigayil, and Queen Esther, daughter of Avi'ayil — may You bless this woman and let her name (in Yisra'el) be ... [insert first name here] with good luck and in a blessed hour; and so may it be your will, and let it be said, Amen!"

מִי שֶׁבֵּרַךְ (אֲמוֹתֵינוּ) שָׂרָה וְרִבְקָה רָחֵל וְלֵאָה וּמִרְיָם הַנְּבִיאָה וְאַבִּיגַיִל וְאֶסְתֵּר הַמַּלְכָּה בַּת
אֲבִיחַיִל הוּא יְבָרֵךְ אֶת הָאִשָּׁה הַזֹּאת וְיִקְרָא שְׁמָהּ (בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל) [פְּלוֹנִית] בְּמִזְל טוֹב וּבְשַׁעַת בְּרָכָה.
וְכֵן יְהִי רָצוֹן וְנֹאמַר אָמֵן:

Mi shebberakh immoteinu Sara veRivka Rachel veLe'a uMiryam hannevi'a va'Avigayil
ve'Esther hammalka bat Avi'ayil hu yevarekh et ha'isha hazzot veyikkarei shemahh beYisra'el
[] bemazzal tov uvesha'at berakha vekhen yehi ratson venomar amen.

For a man: May You who blessed (our forefathers): Avraham, Yitschak, and Yaakov, Moshe and Aharon, Yoav ben Tsurayah and Mordechai ben Yair — may You bless this man and let his name (in Yisra'el) be ... [insert first name here] with good luck and in a blessed hour; and so may it be your will, and let it be said, Amen!"

מִי שֶׁבֵּרַךְ (אֲבוֹתֵינוּ) אַבְרָהָם, יִצְחָק, וְיַעֲקֹב מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן יוֹאֵב בֶּן־צֻרְיָה וּמֹרְדֵכַי בֶּן־יָאִיר הוּא
יְבָרֵךְ אֶת הָאִישׁ הַזֶּה וְיִקְרָא שְׁמוֹ (בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל) [פְּלוֹנִי] בְּמִזְל טוֹב וּבְשַׁעַת בְּרָכָה. וְכֵן יְהִי רָצוֹן
וְנֹאמַר אָמֵן:

Mi shebberakh avoteinu Avraham Yitschak veYa'akov Mosheh veAharon Yo'av ben-Tsuraya
uMordekhay ben-Ya'ir hu' yevarekh et ha'ish hazzeh veyikkarei shemo beYisra'el []
bemazzal tov uvesha'at berakha vekhen yehi ratson venomar amen.

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Ritual Guide to B-Mitzvah



The Set Up

The opportunity to offer a simplified version of a B-mitzvah ceremony as part of a Birthright Israel trip is a unique way to bring a meaningful ritual to participants with limited Jewish literacy. This iconic ritual offers a powerful bonding moment in the trip, and ideally will inspire participants to continue with Jewish learning and Hillel involvement for many years beyond the trip.

Key Words: Peoplehood Affirmation Responsibility Bar (son) Bat (daughter) B'nei (children/sons) Bar Mitzvah (son of commandment) Bat Mitzvah (daughter of commandment) B-mitzvah (a gender neutral term) Torah (the first five books of the Hebrew bible) Aliyah ("going up" to the Torah) Parsha (the official Torah reading of a particular week of the year) Haftarah (the official reading from *Prophets* for a particular week of the year)

Ritual Items: Wine/Grape Juice; Special Cup for Kiddush (see Kiddush); Small wrapped candy (for tossing in celebration); Copy of Torah reading, prayers, poems, or speech; B-Mitzvah Certificate (You can find copies of this in your travel bag.)

Step-by-Step:

1. Person becoming B-mitzvah will recite the blessings over the Torah plus other key prayers you might choose.
2. Read from Torah (individual becoming B-mitzvah can read in Hebrew or English, or another person can read).
3. Person becoming B-mitzvah shares reflections on Torah reading, a recent or upcoming community service project, the history of the site of the ceremony or another topic of choice, and the public commitment or other takeaway that results from the B-mitzvah.
4. Sing "Siman tov, mazal tov," dance in a circle, and throw candy at the B-Mitzvah.

Blessings:

See back page.

Preparation Needed!

Select a date for ceremony.

Tip: Choose 'mentors' among participants who have become B-mitzvah to pair with each of the students who will become B-mitzvah.

Questions to consider: Weekday or Shabbat? Is only one person becoming B-mitzvah or a group of participants all at once? How formal will this be? Will you try to get a Torah scroll or just read from a book or some papers? Will there be a reception with food afterward?

Tip: Combine with another celebratory meal during the trip such as a wine & cheese tasting at a farm.

Format in large type and print out the Aliyah blessings that can be found on Hillel's Crafting Ritual resource page or copy the back page of this guide. Bring the page to the ceremony for people becoming B-Mitzvah to read aloud.

A note about B-mitzvah ceremonies without a Torah scroll: Though most people who "have a B-mitzvah" choose to have the ritual be focused around Torah reading, there are an increasing number of contemporary innovations that have other themes and actions. If you have a participant who wants to become B-Mitzvah but doesn't already feel a connection to the Torah, consider brainstorming other ways for them to lead a short ritual (such as a blessing over food or other senses, see "Blessings Ritual Guide"), or simply give a short talk or lead a study session about the history of a sacred site as part of the trip. You can always follow it with throwing candy and toasting with some delicious local wine. **Tip:** Participants who choose this 'mini' simplified ritual should be encouraged to learn enough Hebrew to read from the Torah or Haftorah after the trip.

Texts

Mishnah Niddah 5:6

A girl eleven years old and one day, her vows must be examined [to determine if they are valid]. A girl twelve years old and one day, her vows stand. And we examine [her vows]

all through the twelfth [year]. Regarding a boy of twelve years and one day, his vows are examined [to determine if they are valid]. At thirteen years and one day, his vows stand. And we examine [his vows] for the entire thirteenth [year].

משנה נדה ה:

בת אחת עשרה שנה ויום אחד. נדריה נבדקין. בת שתים עשרה שנה ויום אחד. נדריה קיימין. ובדקין כל שתים עשרה. בן שתים עשרה שנה ויום אחד, נדריו נבדקים. בן שלש עשרה שנה ויום אחד, נדריו קיימין. ובדקין כל שלש עשרה.

Midrash Bereshit Rabba 63:10, commenting on Genesis 25:27

"and the boys grew." – Rabbi Pinchas said in the name of Rabbi Levi: They (Esau and Jacob) were like a myrtle and wild rose bush growing side by side; when they attained to maturity, one yielded its fragrance and other its thorns. So for 13 years both went to school and came home from school. After this age, one went to the house of study and the other to shrines of idols. Said Rabbi Elazar the son of Rabbi Shimon: 'A man must take responsibility for his son up to the age of thirteen years, and from then on he needs to say "Blessed is the One who has released me from punishment because of him."'

בראשית רבה סג: על בראשית כה:כז

"וַיִּגְדְּלוּ הַנְּעָרִים" – רבי לוי אמר משל להדס ועצבונת שהיו גדלים זה על גבי זה, וכן שהגדילו והפריחו זה נותן ריחו וזה חוחו, כך כל י"ג שנה שניהם הולכים לבית הספר ושניהם באים מבית הספר, לאחר י"ג שנה זה היה הולך לבתי מדרשות וזה היה הולך לבתי עבודת כוכבים. אמר רבי אלעזר צריך אדם להטפל בבנו עד י"ג שנה, מיכן ואילך צריך שיאמר ברור שפטרני מענשו של זה.

Marbeh Lisaper on Pesach Haggadah, Nirtsah, Echad Mi Yodea 1:27

To make a party for his son when he is thirteen years old.

מרבה לספר על הגדה של פסח, נרצה, אחד מי יודע א:כ"ז
לעשות משתה לבנו ביום שהוא בן י"ג שנים.

Themes for Reflection

For students who became B-mitzvah at age 13: What are your memories of the ceremony? Of

the preparation? Was it transformative, performative? How did your family members relate to the experience? What would you do differently knowing what you know now? Look at the text about age 13. What is unique about age 13? Do you connect with the mystical significance of the number? Why or why not?

What does it mean to “become B-mitzvah” at ages 18-26, without any parents present? What are you moving into? What are you committing to? Do you think more Jews should wait until they are old enough to choose to have the ceremony?

Want to Learn More?

To learn to chant the blessings for Torah reading, find sources on the origins of bar and bat mitzvah, read about adult B-mitzvah and the role of Birthright trips and more, visit Hillel’s Crafting Ritual resource page at <https://tinyurl.com/Crafting-Ritual-Resources>.

Next Steps

Use this Ritual with Your Students Throughout the Year

As soon as students sign up for your trip, survey them to see who would like to take part in a brief B-Mitzvah ceremony. Meet with them as a group to plan out how the ceremony will be conducted and get them prepping before the trip begins.

Encourage students who have taken part in the ceremony to share about the experience while back at campus. Then, announce that there will be an adult B-mitzvah class for any students on campus who would like to take on a small project, such as reading Torah or giving a speech. The official ceremony could be on Shabbat or a holiday, or simply on a weeknight.

Ideally, students who choose to become B-mitzvah as part of your trip will see this as the beginning of a deeper connection to Judaism. You might consider encouraging these students to pair their ceremony on the trip with a key project when they return to campus such as community service, alternative spring break, or gathering other students for a study group (taught by you, the trip leader!) on a topic they would like to learn more about.

Blessings:

Upon their aliyah, the B-Mitzvah says:

Bless YHVH (Hashem) the blessed one. Barkhu et Adonai hamvorakh. בְּרַכּוּ אֶת ה' הַמְבָרֵךְ:

The congregation responds:

Blessed is YHVH (Hashem) the blessed one in the world forever.

Barukh Adonai hamvorakh l'olam va'ed. בְּרוּךְ ה' הַמְבָרֵךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

The B-Mitzvah repeats:

Blessed is YHVH (Hashem) the blessed one in the world forever.

Barukh Adonai hamvorakh l'olam va'ed. בְּרוּךְ ה' הַמְבָרֵךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

And continues:

Blessed are you, YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah, majesty of the world, who has chosen us from among the peoples, and and gave us Your Torah. Blessed are you, YHVH (Hashem), who gives the Torah. Barukh atta, Adonai Elohenu, melekh ha-olam, asher bakhar banu mikol ha-amim, v'natan lanu et torato. Barukh atta Adonai, noten ha-Torah.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בָּנוּ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים וְנָתַן לָנוּ אֶת תּוֹרָתוֹ:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' נֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה:

:After reading the Torah, the Oleh makes the following blessing

Blessed are you, YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah, majesty of the world, who has given us a true teaching, and planted eternal life within us. Blessed are you, YHVH, who gifts the Torah.

Barukh atta, Adonai Elohenu, melekh ha-olam, asher natan lanu Torat emet, v'khayyei olam nata b'tokhenu. Barukh atah, Adonai, noten haTorah.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לָנוּ תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת וַחַיֵּי עוֹלָם נָטַע בְּתוֹכֵנוּ:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' נֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה:

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Ritual Guide to
Blessings of
Appreciation



The Set Up

What are you noticing that is worthy of blessing? Ever since Talmudic times, Jewish tradition has encouraged us to say 100 blessings per day. Whether pausing before eating to consider the source of food, or taking an extra few moments of awareness while in nature, integrating these blessings of appreciation into each day can bring your group another dimension of connection and presence during their trip. Look for "The Blessings" card included with these "Crafting Ritual" materials. It includes many of the blessings you will need to get you started.

Key Words: Mindfulness Gratitude Creator Earth

Ritual Items: Food for blessings; "The Blessings" card with each blessing on it

Saying Blessings Step-by-Step:

1. Hold up the food item
2. Say the Blessing
3. Those around the table should answer "Amen"
4. Cut/rip the food into pieces
5. Pass around for everyone to enjoy
6. After eating, say an 'after blessing' such as *Brih Rakhamana* (see "The Blessings" card) or *Birkat Hamazon* (page 14 of "Shabbat" booklet)

Blessings:

See "The Blessings" card.



Creative Adaptations

Give out cards with blessings and discuss one or more texts above, using 'themes' as a prompt.

Create an activity where participants write their own blessings of appreciation, or call out spontaneous blessings as they feel moved.

Begin each day with an attitude of gratitude and have each person share one thing that they are feeling grateful for.

Feature a blessing of the day that is chosen by a participant and related to a specific site you plan to visit.

Suggest a scavenger hunt while visiting a shuk in Jerusalem or Tel Aviv; play a game where students have to guess the blessing for a particular food or other item they find there.

Tip: If you visit a farm or winery, look for opportunities to say blessings directly over food you harvest as a group.

Texts

Mishnah Berakhot 6:1

What blessing do we say over fruit? Over the fruit of trees, one says, "...who creates the fruit of the tree," except over wine; for over wine one says, "...who creates the fruit of the vine." Over the fruits of the earth one says, "...who creates the fruit of the ground," except over bread; for over bread one says, "...who bringest forth bread from the earth." On vegetables, one says, "...who creates the fruit of the ground." Rabbi Yehudah says: [One should say instead,] "...who creates various types of herbs."

משנה ברכות ו:א

כיצד מברכין על הפרות. על פרות האילן אומר, בורא פרי העץ, חוץ מן היין, שעל היין אומר בורא פרי הגפן. ועל פרות הארץ אומר בורא פרי האדמה, חוץ מן הפת, שעל הפת

הוא אומר המוציא להם מן הארץ. ועל היקנות אומר בורא פרי האדמה. רבי יהודה אומר, בורא מיני דשאים:

Talmud Bavli, Berakhot 35a-b

Rav Yehudah said in the name of Shmuel: To enjoy anything of this world without a blessing is like making personal use of things consecrated to heaven, since it says, "The earth is YHVH's and the fullness thereof." (Psalms 24:1) Rabbi Levi raised a contradiction: It is written, "The earth is YHVH's and the fullness thereof", and it is also written, "The heavens are the heavens of YHVH, but the earth was gifted to humankind!" (Psalm 115:16) There is no contradiction: in the one case it is before the blessing [has been said], in the other case, afterward.

תלמוד בבלי, ברכות ל"ה א-ב

רב יהודה אמר שמואל כל הנהנה מן העולם הזה בלא ברכה כאילו נהנה מקדשי שמים שנאמר "לה', הארץ ומלואה" (תהלים כד:א). רבי לוי רמי כתיב "הארץ ומלואה" (תהלים כד:א) וכתיב "השמים שמים לה' והארץ נתן לבני-אדם" (תהלים קטו:טז). לא קשיא כאן קודם ברכה כאן לאחר ברכה.

Man is not Alone by Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel

As civilization advances, the sense of wonder declines. Such decline is an alarming symptom of our state of mind. We will not perish for want of information; but only for want of appreciation.

R. Nachman of Bratslav, L'M I:133 (trans. A.J. Heschel, *God in Search of Man*)

The world is full of wonders, special radiance, and marvelous secrets, but all it takes is a small hand held over the eye to hide it all.

Themes for Reflection

Berakhot:

How do the rabbis in Berakhot 35a-b reconcile the two verses from Psalms?

How does saying a blessing make eating into a holy act?

What comes to mind when you take time out to say a "traditional" blessing?

What are other ways to practice mindful eating?

Rank the following in order of personal importance. What informs these values?

Time to say a blessing before eating

Local vegetables

Kosher meat

Time to digest after a meal

Time to say a blessing after a meal

Free range eggs

A community to share a meal with

Bread

Local produce

Heschel:

How does Heschel define information vs. appreciation?

How do you think he understood 'civilization' in the year 1951?

What sort of 'state of mind' is he referring to?

Where do you have wonder in your life?

What is an example of 'hand held over the eye' in your daily life? On this trip?

Want to Learn More?

To download the Hazon Blessing Card and learn to recite many other blessings, visit Hillel's Crafting Ritual resource page at <https://tinyurl.com/Crafting-Ritual-Resources> to find helpful links.

Next Steps

Use this Ritual with Your Students Throughout the Year

Incorporate favorite blessings from the trip into weekly Hillel Shabbat meals.

Share traditional or creative food blessings during weekday events, even if the focus of the event isn't on food.

Gather students for a day hike or visit another beautiful natural setting such as a farm or orchard. Review the relevant blessings and share them with the group.

Seek out a local open air market, similar to the shuk in Jerusalem, and go on another tasting + blessing adventure.



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The Blessings

On eating breads:

Blessed are you YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah, majesty of the world, who brings forth bread from the earth.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם הַמּוֹצִיא
לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ:

Barukh atta Adonai Elohenu melek ha'olam
hammotsi lekhem min ha'arets.

On eating foods made with grains (besides bread):

Blessed are you YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah, majesty of the world, who creates different kinds of foods.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא מִיֵּי
מִזּוֹנוֹת:

Barukh atta Adonai Elohenu melek ha'olam
borei minei mezonot.

On drinking wine or grape juice:

Blessed are you YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah, majesty of the world, who creates the fruit of the vine.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פֵרִי
הַגָּפֶן (הַגָּפֶן):

Barukh atta Adonai Elohenu melek ha'olam
borei peri hagafen (haggafen).

On eating fruits of trees and bushes (including grapes):

Blessed are you YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah, majesty of the world, who creates the fruit of the tree.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פֵרִי
הָעֵץ:

Barukh atta Adonai Elohenu melek ha'olam
borei pri ha'ets.

On eating produce from the ground (including bananas):

Blessed are you YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah, majesty of the world, who creates the fruit of the earth.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פֵרִי
הָאֲדָמָה:

Barukh atta Adonai Elohenu melek ha'olam
borei pri ha'adama.

On water, juices, milk, or the flesh of an animal:

Blessed are you YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah, majesty of the world, at whose will all things come into being.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
שֶׁהַכֹּל נִהְיָ בְּדַבָּרוֹ:

Barukh atta Adonai Elohenu melek ha'olam
shehakol nihiyeh bidvaro.

On eating fruit for the first time in its season:

Blessed are you YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah, majesty of the world, who kept us alive and preserved us and enabled us to reach this season.

ברוך אתה ה' א-להינו מלך העולם שְׁהַחֲיֵנו
וְקִיְמָנוּ וְהַגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמֶן הַזֶּה:

Barukh atta Adonai Elohenu melek ha'olam
shehekheyanu vekimanu vehiggi'anu
lazman hazzeh.

When preparing to smell or upon smelling fragrances that are (a) a blend of spices of different origins, or (b) of non-vegetable origins (e.g. synthetic perfumes), or (c) of undetermined origin:

Blessed are you YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah, majesty of the world, who creates different kinds of spices.

ברוך אתה ה' א-להינו מלך העולם בורא מיני
בְּשָׂמִים:

Barukh atta Adonai Elohenu melek ha'olam
borei minei vesamim.

Upon smelling fragrant trees and shrubs or their flowers (e.g. roses).

Blessed are you YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah, majesty of the world, who creates fragrant trees.

ברוך אתה ה' א-להינו מלך העולם בורא עֲצֵי
בְּשָׂמִים:

Barukh atta Adonai Elohenu melek ha'olam
borei atsei vesamim.

Upon smelling fragrant herbs, grasses or flowers:

Blessed are you YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah, majesty of the world, who creates fragrant vegetation.

ברוך אתה ה' א-להינו מלך העולם בורא
עֲשְׂבֵי בְּשָׂמִים:

Barukh atta Adonai Elohenu melek ha'olam
borei isvei vesamim.

Upon smelling fragrant edible fruit or nuts:

Blessed are you YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah, majesty of the world, who gives a pleasant fragrance to fruits.

ברוך אתה ה' א-להינו מלך העולם הנותן ריח
טוֹב בְּפְרוֹת:

Barukh atta Adonai Elohenu melek ha'olam
hannoten re'akh tov baperot.

On smelling fragrant oils:

Blessed are you YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah, majesty of the world, who creates fragrant oil.

ברוך אתה ה' א-להינו מלך העולם בורא שֶׁמֶן
עָרֵב:

Barukh atta Adonai Elohenu melek ha'olam
borei shemen araiv.

On witnessing a rainbow in the sky:

Blessed are you YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah, majesty of the world, who remembers the covenant, and is faithful in Your promise, and upright in Your statement.

ברוך אתה ה' א-להינו מלך העולם זוכר
הברית ונאמן בבריתו וקיים במאמרו:

Barukh atta Adonai Elohenu melek ha'olam
zokher habrit vene'eman bivrito vekayyam
bema'amaro.

**On witnessing two or more fruit trees
blossoming in the first two months of
spring:**

Blessed are you YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah,
majesty of the world, who has withheld
nothing from the world and had created
lovely creatures and beautiful trees
for humanity to take pleasure in.

ברוך אתה ה' א-להינו מלך העולם שכל
בעולמו נדבר, וברא בו בריות טובות ואילנות
טובים, ליהנות בהם בני אדם:

Barukh atta Adonai Elohenu melek ha'olam
shelo khissar ba'olamo davar uvara' vo briyyot
tovot ve'ilanot tovim layhannot bahem bnei
adam.

Upon witnessing a sea or an ocean:

Blessed are you YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah,
majesty of the world, who has made the great
sea.

ברוך אתה ה' א-להינו מלך העולם שעשה
את הים הגדול:

Barukh atta Adonai Elohenu melek ha'olam
she'asa et hayyam haggadol.

**Upon witnessing exceptionally beautiful
people, trees or fields:**

Blessed are you YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah,
majesty of the world, who has such in the
world.

ברוך אתה ה' א-להינו מלך העולם שזכה לו
בעולמו:

Barukh atta Adonai Elohenu melek ha'olam
shekkakha lo ba'olamo.

**Upon witnessing exceptional difference in
human or non-human animals:**

Blessed are you YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah,
majesty of the world, who differentiated the
creatures.

ברוך אתה ה' א-להינו מלך העולם משנה
הבריות:

Barukh atta Adonai Elohenu melek ha'olam
meshanneh habriyyot.

**Upon witnessing lightning, a shooting-
star, exceptionally lofty mountains, or
exceptionally large rivers (in their natural
course):**

Blessed are you YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah,
majesty of the world, who made the work of
Creation.

ברוך אתה ה' א-להינו מלך העולם עשה
מעשה בראשית:

Barukh atta Adonai Elohenu melek ha'olam
oseh ma'aseh vere'shit.

On witnessing thunder:

Blessed are you YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah, majesty of the world, whose strength and power fill the world.

ברוך אתה ה' א-להינו מלך העולם שכוח וגבורתו מלא עולם:

Barukh atta Adonai Elohenu melek ha'olam shekokho ugurato malei olam.

On witnessing a restored synagogue:

Blessed are you YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah, majesty of the world, who restores the borders of the widow.

ברוך אתה ה' א-להינו מלך העולם מציב גבול אלמנה:

Barukh atta Adonai Elohenu melek ha'olam matsiv ge'vul almana.

On witnessing a scholar of Torah:

Blessed are you YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah, majesty of the world, who has imparted wisdom to the reverent.

ברוך אתה ה' א-להינו מלך העולם שחלק מחכמתו ליראיו:

Barukh atta Adonai Elohenu melek ha'olam shekhalak mekhakhmato lirei'av.

On witnessing a great scholar of the sciences, arts, and humanities:

Blessed are you YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah, majesty of the world, who has imparted wisdom to flesh and blood.

ברוך אתה ה' א-להינו מלך העולם שנתן מחכמתו לבשר ודם:

Barukh atta Adonai Elohenu melek ha'olam shennatan mekhakhmato levasar va-dam.

When there isn't time to recite a full

Grace After Meals:

Blessed is the merciful One, [majesty of the world,] creator of this bread.

ברוך רחמנא [מלכא דעלמא] מריה דהאי פיתא:

Brikh rakhamana [malka d'alma] marei d'hai pita.

When visiting a place where miracles occurred for the Jewish people:

Blessed are you YHVH (Hashem) our elo'ah, majesty of the world, who made miracles for our ancestors in this place.

ברוך אתה ה' א-להינו מלך העולם שעשה נסים לאבותינו במקום הזה:

Barukh atta Adonai Elohenu melek ha'olam she'asa nissim la'avotenu bammakom hazzeh.

HillelU

Center for Jewish & Israeli Education

www.hillel.org • 202-449-6500

For questions, assistance with the guides, or other information, please contact Mollie at mandron@hillel.org

Want to Learn More?



Creating Jewish ritual: Some General Guidelines

Two links *Inventing Jewish Ritual*, by Vanessa Ochs
(Jewish Publication Society, 2007).

<http://www.mayyimhayyim.org/assets/5a-%20Ochs,%20Toolbox.pdf>

<http://www.tabletmag.com/jewish-life-and-religion/1320/ritual-du-jour>

Hadlakat Neirot (Shabbat Candle Lighting)

Words/Music/Method

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kfRea4na51A>

<http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/shabbat-candles/>

History/Interpretation/Meaning

<http://www.jtsa.edu/the-meaning-of-the-shabbat-candles>

<https://www.ritualwell.org/ritual/special-mitzvah-shabbat-candles>

Kiddush (Blessing Wine)

Words/Music/Method

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAZpA8K2syU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zKcYRCbsGfQ>

Kiddush (Blessing Wine) *continued*

History/Interpretation/Meaning

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/kiddush/>

<http://www.foodandwine.com/wine/9-legitimately-good-kosher-wines-passover>

HaMotzi (Blessing Bread)

Words/Music/Method

<https://www.theshabbosproject.org/en/toolkit/hamotzi-sefardi>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sr_HW3rpXHE

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zKcYRCbsGfQ>

History/Interpretation/Meaning

<http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/hamotzi-the-deeper-significance-of-the-blessing-over-bread/>

<http://www.jewfaq.org/shabbat.htm>

Explanation of the laws of Shabbat

http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/02/dining/challah-recipe-history.html?_r=0

Julia Moskin on challah

<https://jewishfoodexperience.com/breads-bakery-nyc-meets-tel-aviv/>

About Breads Bakery in NYC and Lechamim in Tel Aviv

Havdalah (Ending Shabbat)

Words/Music/Method

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5AhRFMTy6lk>

Havdalah (Ending Shabbat) *continued*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JDn1zOqPVx4>

<http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/havdalah-taking-leave-of-shabbat/>

History/Interpretation/Meaning

<http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/havdalah-taking-leave-of-shabbat/>

<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/havdalah>

<https://www.huffingtonpost.com/rabbi-lawrence-troster/the-spicebox-of-earth-rem b 875998.html>

For Creative Adaptations

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qde5NMy7WTU>

Carole King singing *You've Got a Friend*

<https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/caroleking/youvegotafriend.html>

[https://www.vevo.com/watch/john-mayer/slow-dancing-in-a-burning-room-\(live-on-letterman\)/USQX91301884](https://www.vevo.com/watch/john-mayer/slow-dancing-in-a-burning-room-(live-on-letterman)/USQX91301884)

<https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/johnmayer/slowdancinginaburningroom.html>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PBo-n 17XU0>

Leonard Cohen's *Hallelujah*, recorded by Rufus Wainwright

<https://genius.com/Leonard-cohen-hallelujah-lyrics>

Naming Ceremony

History/Interpretation/Meaning

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/how-to-pick-a-hebrew-name/>

<http://www.reclaimingjudaism.org/teachings/guide-choosing-jewish-name>

B-Mitzvah

Words/Music/Method

<https://www.swfs.org/torah-aliyah-blessings/>

<http://opensiddur.org/prayers-for/bat-bar-mitzvah/prayer-for-a-bat-mitzvah-after-she-finishes-reading-from-the-torah/>

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/aliyah/>

<https://www.ritualwell.org/ritual/twelve-ways-make-your-bat-mitzvah-meaningful>

History/Interpretation/Meaning

<https://ajrsem.org/teachings/journal/5765journal/krieger5765/#2>

<http://www.rabbim.co.uk/sources/origin/>

Origins of the bar mitzvah

<http://www.rabbim.co.uk/sources/bat-mitzvah/>

Origins of the bat mitzvah

https://www.huffingtonpost.com/rabbi-michael-knopf/making-barbat-mitzvah-mea_b_7283162.html

<https://urj.org/bnai-mitzvah-revolution>

B-Mitzvah *continued*

Personal Reflections

<http://www.tabletmag.com/the-roll/103276/do-bar-mitzvahs-happen-on-every-birthright-trip>

<http://www.tabletmag.com/the-roll/103260/birthrights-bar-mitzvah-class-of-2012>

<https://ritualwell.org/ritual/adult-bat-mitzvah-journey>

Blessings of Appreciation & Radical Amazement

Words/Music/Method

<https://issuu.com/shiryaakov/docs/hazon-blessing-card>

Hazon Blessing Card for travelers

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/blessings-for-food-drink/>

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/everyday-blessings-rituals/>

History/Interpretation/Meaning

<http://www.aish.com/jl/jewish-law/blessings/Crash-Course-in-Jewish-Blessings.html>

